

All South Carolinians are proud of David Wilkins making history by becoming an ambassador to our appreciated northern neighbor. In 1994, he made history to become the first Republican Speaker of the House of a Southern legislature in the 20th century, followed by many speakers, from Austin to Richmond.

Godspeed, David and Susan.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

#### THANKS FOR ADDRESSING THE VITAL ISSUE OF SOCIAL SECURITY

(Mr. MCHENRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, tonight our President addressed the Nation on the issue of Social Security reform, a vital issue not just for current retirees, but for generations to come. I want to praise what the President had to say tonight.

This is one of the most major issues that we can take on as a Congress, the largest single issue we can take on here in the United States House of Representatives, so I think it is important that we say thank you to the President for taking on this important and vital issue that generations of Americans have relied upon.

Social Security is important. We do not want to break it, we want to improve it and make sure it is a lasting institution, not just for those retirees today and those that are close to retirement, but for those of my generation, the Generation X-ers, who believe that Social Security will not be around for them. Also, we need to have personal private personal retirement accounts as part of Social Security.

Thank you, Mr. President, for addressing this vital issue.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Miss MCMORRIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

#### SMART SECURITY AND MISSION UNACCOMPLISHED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, over the last few months, the Iraqi people have been making strides toward democracy by holding elections, nominating ministers and working on a draft constitution. I congratulate the people of Iraq for their very brave efforts, efforts that I am certain were intended to take Iraq back for the people of Iraq.

Though admirable, none of Iraq's recent advances validate the false pre-

tenses that caused the United States to fight a war in a country that never threatened us, never attacked us and never posed a threat to our way of life. But, sadly, despite the false pretenses under which this war was fought, President Bush and his administration have continued to insist that Iraq is close to becoming a stable and viable democracy. The President claims that the war in Iraq is going well and that our military is succeeding.

Madam Speaker, I do not know about you, but I do not consider the deaths of over 1,500 American soldiers and countless tens of thousands of innocent Iraqi civilians and no end in sight as a military success.

Yet, declaring success in the very face of chaos is nothing new for this President. May 2 is the second anniversary of his speech declaring "an end to major combat operations" under a banner declaring "mission accomplished." Mission accomplished.

One year later, many experts have different opinions. In fact, earlier today I participated in an event with Daniel Ellsberg, the author of the Pentagon Papers, which revealed that President Richard Nixon was deceiving the American people about the role America played in the Vietnam War. From his past experience, Mr. Ellsberg believes that Iraq will not be safe for years to come and that the Bush administration seems eager to maintain high troop levels in the country for the foreseeable future. To what end, he and I both ask?

I question that if there are 150,000 fully-trained Iraqi soldiers, as the President claims, then why are America's 150,000 troops still in Iraq? Why do they remain there as sitting ducks for drive-by shootings and car bombings?

Unfortunately, I believe that the reason is the Bush administration is gearing up for a sustained military occupation of Iraq, with access to oil having more to do with that occupation than our government admits.

Evidence certainly points to an occupation that will not end any time soon. The Bush administration has specifically sought funds for 14 military bases in Iraq, claiming they are not permanent. The very idea of funding American military bases in Iraq more than suggests that President Bush is not serious about turning Iraq over to the Iraqis any time soon. In fact, Daniel Ellsberg believes that the U.S. occupation of Iraq could last longer than the U.S. occupation of Vietnam in the 1970s, which persisted for a total of 16 years. This should scare everyone who values peace, who values democracy and fiscal sanity.

The possibility that the United States could maintain a military presence in Iraq for years to come is dangerous; dangerous to our foreign policy and inconsistent with the values that most Americans hold dear.

Fortunately, however, the continued occupation of Iraq has the American people talking seriously about a with-

drawal. That is why I introduced H. Con. Res. 35 in January of this year, legislation calling for the withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq. By removing American troops, we will remove the main focus of the insurgents' rage. Bringing our troops home is the only way to keep them safe and out of harm's way.

Everyone likes to talk about supporting the troops. Well, it is time to truly support our troops, by bringing them home, and we should begin that effort today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### THE CLEAR ACT OF 2005 AND THE MINUTEMEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORWOOD. Madam Speaker, this month the Minuteman Project has accomplished with just a few hundred citizen volunteers what the Federal Government has been unable to do and actually told us was impossible to do, and that is stopping illegal immigrants crossing our borders.

In the process of focusing the Nation's attention on the insecurity of our borders, they have succeeded in bringing new information to the debate on the overall immigration crisis in this Nation. The new information is critical to this body's consideration of a specific policy area, probably and frankly the one area in which all Americans should be in 100 percent agreement, and that is protecting Americans from criminal illegal immigrants.

U.S. Border Patrol Sector Chief Michael Nicely is head of the entire 260 mile long Tucson Sector of our border, the worst in the Nation for illegal immigration, and the same sector where the Minutemen shutdown a 23 mile portion of that sector.

What should be horrifying to all Americans is what Chief Nicely told Government Executive Magazine just last week. He says that since November, the Border Patrol agents have caught 17,000 criminal illegal aliens trying to enter our country through just through this one 260 mile sector; 17,000 criminal illegal aliens. That is not total illegal aliens now, just the criminals. Overall, Chief Nicely's sector has arrested more than a quarter of a million people trying to enter this country illegally just since Thanksgiving.

Last year, I introduced legislation specifically targeting against criminal illegal aliens. The Clear Law Enforcement For Criminal Aliens Removal